

October 6, 2005

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the religious organizations we represent, we urge you to support the Boehlert-Markey amendment to increase the Corporate Fuel Economy of America's vehicles to 33 miles per gallon by 2016. Raising the fuel economy standard is an important and necessary first step to address the challenge of global warming.

Global warming will have severe impacts on human health, natural ecosystems, agriculture, and coastal communities. We will all suffer from the consequences of climate change, but as we have already seen, the first victims will be those in the low lying coastal zones who are so vulnerable to the increased intensity of hurricanes, to heat waves, to flooding and to the disease that so often comes in the aftermath of these disasters. As is so often the case, those most severely impacted will be the poor, the elderly, children, and people of color.

In Genesis 2:15, God calls humans to "tend and keep" this garden called earth. This Biblical call includes being good caretakers of the earth's resources -- maintaining the quality of the air we breathe and curbing global climate change, that threatens the well being of all of Creation. We must act upon the call to love, preserve and restore the creation.

Strengthening CAFE standards for would reduce air pollution, decrease our reliance on imported fuels, decrease the need to open sensitive wilderness areas to oil and gas exploration, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It would also be a concrete step toward addressing the rising prices that all Americans are facing at the gas pump.

Raising CAFE standards is an important step we can take to meet the challenge of climate change. A higher CAFE standard would mean lower fuel consumption, thereby reducing greenhouse enhancing carbon dioxide emissions. Higher CAFE standards would benefit our families and our communities. Lower gasoline bills would translate into more savings, or more disposable income to be spent on food, clothing, and housing.

We urge you to vote in favor of strengthening CAFE standards. This measure will protect human health, increase our energy security, and curb the warming of the earth which threatens all of God's creation.

Sincerely,

Brethren Witness/Washington Office

Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life (COEJL)

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Friends Committee on National Legislation

Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America

Jewish Council for Public Affairs

National Council of Churches of Christ, USA

Presbyterian Church (USA), Washington Office

Union for Reform Judaism

United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society